

Washington Trends

JFK vs. Russell

The President is running into opposition from Richard Russell, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, on plans to reorganize the Central Intelligence Agency.

The President wants to split the CIA into two agencies—one to gather intelligence, the other to conduct secret operations.

The problem: Kennedy wants to put the operational agency under military control. But Russell objects on the ground that the new agency would become a stepchild of the Pentagon.

Russell also argues that the purpose of the super-secret agency would be defeated because it's almost impossible to keep a secret in the Pentagon.

Election Reform

Prospects are looking up for Congressional action on at least one major change in the method of electing a President. Namely, the abolition of Presidential electors.

This was one of 21 proposals considered by the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments in hearings last week.

Subcommittee chairman Sen. Estes Kefauver hopes the reform can be pushed through by the next session of Congress.

Proposed solution to the present confusion: Simply adding up the electoral votes for each candidate in each state and declaring a winner.

Racket Busting: Its Problems

Attorney General Robert Kennedy's eight-point anti-crime program will probably have to be revised to get Congressional approval.

Here's why: Critics on the Senate Judiciary Committee complained that the original proposals were too broad and vague.

They particularly objected to a bill which would have made it a crime to cross state lines with intent to commit a crime. The vague phrase, *with intent*, lifted legal eyebrows.

Democratic Sen. Sam Ervin snapped: "The proposal is ineffective and dangerous." To Bobby Kennedy, Ervin indicated that he believed the

bill could be called a "thought-control" bill. Justice Department lawyers have already drafted a substitute proposal which does not include the "intent" clause.

Peace at the Pentagon

Relations between New Frontier civilian administrators and military leaders—once marked by bitterness—are improving.

Insiders give much of the credit for smoothing over the conflict to Gen. Lyman L. Lemnitzer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and Defense Secretary Robert McNamara.

Lemnitzer has patiently reassured military chiefs who feared they were being bypassed by McNamara's fast-moving "whiz kids."

And McNamara has belatedly recognized the need for keeping the military tuned in on Defense Department plans. "Be sure to keep the Joint Chiefs fully informed," is the Defense Secretary's new watchword.

The Uninvited

Plans to invite United Arab Republic President Gamal Abdel Nasser to visit Washington this summer—once under active consideration—have been shelved indefinitely.

President Kennedy had two reasons for wanting to invite Nasser to visit the U.S.:

► In his campaign speeches, the President placed great stress on the need for a peaceful Middle East settlement.

► Nasser's visit to the U.N. General Assembly in New York last fall provoked less hostility than had been feared. It was thought another visit would be taken as a matter of course by anti-Nasser elements in the U.S.

The Administration changed its mind because, while the invitation was still under consideration, Nasser announced his sponsorship of a conference of neutrals—excluding Sweden and Switzerland, but including Castro's Cuba.

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